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Dranesville Dispatch

March 2006

Volume VII

Letter from Supervisor Joan DuBois

Dear fellow citizen,

You are my employer. I am proud of many of the services that the County offers you: a world class school system, unrivaled police and fire protection, a safety net for our vulnerable citizens, 22,000 acres of parks and one of the top ten library systems in the country. I am sure that you have heard that the county's diverse and creative population is larger than 7 states. At the same time, as I begin to review the third budget since I became your supervisor, I find myself asking: are there things we are doing that exceed what you want or need from local government?

Residents of the Dranesville District have experienced 7 years of double digit property tax increases, and the *average* household now spends \$205 more each month in property taxes than they did in 2000. Your county tax dollars buy you \$3.32 billion annually in programs and services. You should have input on what those dollars buy, and you should feel that you are getting a fair return on your investment. Tell me how you would spend your first county dollar and where you would make your first cut.

I want to hear from you, and I promise to listen. I want you to be glad that you are raising your families here, and I want your children to be able to afford to live here themselves. This newsletter highlights many of the things we have to celebrate here in Dranesville. I hope you will come to my Town Meeting on March 25th at Colvin Elementary School and tell me if the county is on the right track.

Joan DuBois



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DRANESVILLE SUPERVISOR JOAN M. DuBOIS INVITES YOU TO



DRANESVILLE DISTRICT TOWN MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 25TH
9 A.M. TO NOON

Featuring presentations by county staff and officials on the proposed FY2007 budget
Updates on Fairfax County services and projects in the Dranesville District
Exhibits and hands-on displays

Colvin Run Elementary School cafeteria
1400 Trap Road, Vienna
(just off Route 7 Leesburg Pike & Towlston Road)

McLean Governmental Center
1437 Balls Hill Road
McLean, VA 22101

Phone: 703-356-0551
Fax: 703-821-4275
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Geographic Information Systems and My Neighborhood

My Neighborhood is Fairfax County's newest effort to communicate with its citizens electronically. This new addition to "e-government" will allow you to enter your own address and access a wealth of information about resources near your home. Currently, the site allows you to select one of three *Views*: **General Information**, **Parks**, and **Demographics**. Additional data will be added next fall.

Each *view* contains unique map types and links which allow you to see different layers of information about the same area. "The system is designed to help citizens find the county resources around them. It gives them the information of where things are instead of what things are," says GIS Branch Manager Thomas Conry.

My Neighborhood can help you learn more about available community resources. It can show you an aerial photograph or topographic map of your home including spot elevations measured in feet. It will tell you the schools in your district and let you link to the principal. You can obtain a library card or check out a book if you click on your closest library, buy stamps by clicking on your closest post office, reserve a picnic shelter for your next gathering, or find the closest golf course by going to the Parks view. You can send an e-mail to your Senator or Congressman by clicking the link that will take you to his Web site.

Finally, **My Neighborhood** can also provide you with a broader look at Northern Virginia demographics such as the breakdown of languages, age, income levels, ethnic origins, and housing types in specific geographic areas. Check out this new tool at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gisapps/myneighborhood/> and provide feedback for how it could better serve you in the future.

Fairfax County Rabies Clinic and Presidential Adoption Event

The Fairfax County Shelter will hold five rabies clinics beginning in March and ending in November. The clinics will be from noon to 2 p.m. March 12, May 21, July 9, September 10 and November 19. The cost is \$10. The shots are for dogs and cats only. Dogs must be leashed, and cats must be in carriers. No rabies tags will be issued. Instead, owners will be given certificates.

Dog licenses will be sold separately. The cost is \$5 for altered animals and \$10 for unaltered. Deepwood Veterinary Clinic and the Police Department's Animal Services division are sponsoring the clinics.

For information on adopting a pet or attending the clinics:

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is located at 4500 West Ox Road, Fairfax Virginia, 22030. (703) 830-1100. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/animals/>



Supervisor DuBois with Hurricane Katrina rescue Freckles, a Catahoula dog, and foster parent Monica Shaughnessy at the Presidential Adoption Event on February 19 at the Fairfax County Shelter. Freckles, all the Hurricane Katrina dogs, along with several other shelter animals, all found loving homes that day!

Safe Community Coalition 2006 Teen Summit



Supervisor DuBois and teen facilitator Tracey Shulman at the teen summit comparing notes during group discussion.

Supervisor Joan DuBois opened the 11th annual Teen Summit and participated in the dialogue between area high school teens, adults, educators and community leaders at the McLean Community Center. The Teen Summit, presented by the Safe Community Coalition, focuses discussion on current topics and develops recommendations for programs that can be implemented in the next two years.

This year's topics, selected by the youth facilitators, included Pre-College and Process Stress, Safe Social Alternatives, Bullying in High School, Alcohol and Drugs, Taking Care of Yourself, and Peer Pressure. The final report with this year's recommendations will be available on the Safe Community Coalition website at <http://members.cox.net/safecommunitycoalition/index.htm>

Chesterbrook Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Chesterbrook Elementary School is planning its 100th anniversary celebration and is looking for alumni, former faculty and staff members, and community residents who have memories to share about the school or the McLean community.

The school is using its 100th anniversary to make history come alive for current students. The event will teach students what life was like in the early 20th century. Daily Centennial Moments are included on the school's morning newscast, featuring fun facts from each of the last 100 years. In March, an assembly will feature staff members in skits depicting previous decades.

An open house birthday celebration is planned for June. Alumni, former faculty or staff members, or community members with memories or photos of the school are asked to send their information to Chesterbrook Elementary School, 1753 Kirby Road, McLean, VA 22101, attention: Amy Hill. For more information, contact Amy at amy.hill@mac.com or Nellie Ohr at neohr@aol.com.

Dranesville District Congratulations

2006 Presidential Scholars Program Winners: McLean; Joanna Berg; Thomas Jefferson for Science and Technology; Rahul Agarwal, Veronica D. Pillar; Sarina Siddhanti; Crystal Y. Zheng; Deborah K. Chen, Jessica J. Kim.

Herndon Boys Basketball team for winning the AAA Northern Region Final with a perfect 20-0 record in the region and moving onto the state tournament.

To Herndon High School basketball team member Scottie Reynolds for being selected the Northern Region tournament's most valuable player.

O'Connell High School senior swimmer Kate Ziegler, for setting yet another record at the recent Metro Championship held in Germantown, MD. In the girls' 500-yard freestyle, Kate's time of 4 minutes 33.35 seconds established not only the fastest high school time ever recorded at that distance, but a third American record for her. Kate's time broke the previous short course record set by five-time Olympic medalist Janet Evans in 1988.

The Herndon Festival for being recently recognized as one of the top community festivals in the nation by Recreation Management Magazine.

To Herndon's Elden Street Players for winning eight awards at the annual Washington Area Theatre Community Honor awards gala on February 26.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment Meeting Announced

Staff from the Department of Planning and Zoning have now compiled a summary of citizen comments received during last fall's community meetings on fifteen possible modifications to the Zoning Ordinance. After listening to citizens, staff has recommended that the Board of Supervisors proceed to hold separate and sequential public hearings on five of these items during 2006:

1. Fences
2. Lot Width
3. Pop-Ups/Carport Enclosures
4. Building Code Emergency Access from Basements
5. 50% Reduction in Minimum Required Yards ("Setbacks")

Staff proposes to launch the next phase of community dialogue this month, beginning with language for a proposed amendment related to the 50% Reduction in Minimum Required Yards ("Setbacks"). Staff will hold a **Public Information Meeting** to discuss possible changes on Monday, **March 20, 2006** from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Conference Rooms 4/5 of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia.

It is anticipated that **proposed development standards will be drafted in advance of this meeting** and will form the basis for the discussion. It is further anticipated that these draft standards will be posted on the Web site below and will be available for pick up at my office and at the Zoning Administration Division office at 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 807, Fairfax, Virginia by no later than **March 10, 2006**. Further details can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/minyard.htm>

Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District 2006 Native Seedling Sale: *A Harvest of Fruits and Nuts*

From late summer into fall, these trees and shrubs produce colorful berries and hearty nuts that feed migrating songbirds and sustain wildlife through the winter.

Whether you are seeking a backyard tree or the perfect shrub for the garden border, these appealing selections will attract wildlife to your landscape. These carefully selected seedlings are bird-friendly and visually appealing all year-round.

Each package contains 14 shrubs and trees and is available for \$16.95.

For more information go to:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsale.htm

or please call (703) 324-1460 or email conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov



Supervisor Joan DuBois was presented with an American flag by the Greater McLean Republican Women at their February meeting. Coming just in time for Flag Day on Friday, February 24th, the flag adorns the Community Room at the McLean Governmental Center. The Supervisor remarked, "I'm delighted to have an American flag in our Community Room. Many groups were asking to borrow the flag from my office for their community events. The flag is a comforting reminder of the freedoms and blessings we share as American citi-

Active Dranesville Land Use Issues

Halcyon Estates

Agents for the Kathryn Kleeb Trust have filed an application to place 6 homes on a 3.67 acre parcel located on the north side of Beulah Road and Atwood Street in the Vienna area (RZ-2005-DR-034). This proposal is still in early stages of staff review and is not scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Commission until May 4, 2006. Issues of density and vehicular access have been raised by the community. The area is planned for 1-2 houses per acre, and this application proposes a density of 1.63 homes per acre.

Virginia Commerce Bank

An application for a Special Exception has been filed (2005-SE-DR-015) but not yet accepted to place a drive-thru bank on a parcel at 725 Walker Road adjacent to the Great Falls Business Center Condominium. The applicant has met with the Great Falls Citizens Association Planning and Zoning Committee and is looking at issues related to tree save and the design and location of a septic field. Public hearing dates have not yet been scheduled.

McLean Glen

Winchester Homes continues to meet with staff, the community, and Planning Commissioner Nancy Hopkins on this application (RZ-2005-DR-009). The applicant has proposed to put 19 homes on 8 acres at Spring Hill Road and Lewinsville Road in McLean. Some of the outstanding issues have to do with space for recreation, interparcel access to adjoining land, and density. The Planning Commission public hearing has been deferred until April 19, and this case will come to the Board of Supervisors on May 1, 2006.

Proposed Monopole in Pimmit Hills

Verizon Wireless has submitted an application (2232-D05-20) to place a 108 foot monopole disguised as a tree at the rear of the Fairfax County Park Authority Area 1 maintenance facility at 1927 Pimmit Drive, near Taylor Street in Pimmit Hills. Verizon conducted a crane test for the community to view the pole on January 20 and 21 and has been meeting with the Pimmit Hills Citizens Association on issues of screening. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this application on March 15, 2006.

Evans Farm

A homeowner has filed an application (FDPA 1998 DR-049-03) to place a single family home and pool house on two lots, reducing the total number of homes by one and slightly changing the approved elevations.

Ballantrae Oaks

Although it was not part of a formal public review process, this site plan, which proposes to put 19 homes on a 27 acre parcel of land off Scotts Run Road in McLean, is now the subject of an appeal before the Fairfax County Circuit Court. In December, the Board of Zoning Appeals, in a 7-0 ruling overruled an earlier determination by the Zoning Administrator that the applicant's proposal to use the Beltway as public road frontage for its site plan was allowed under the Zoning Ordinance.

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I felt strongly that the BZA was correct in its ruling and, on February 6, was able to secure the approval of my fellow Board members to allow the County Attorney to file a motion to intervene on behalf of the Board as a defendant in this case. As land becomes more scarce in the county, some owners have become increasingly creative in maximizing lot yield on remaining parcels. While I will always support the rights of an owner to reasonably develop a property, I believe that this site plan did not meet such a test and look forward to either the results of the court case or a new plan.

Hunter Mill Road

On February 27, along with Supervisor Hudgins, I formally recommended that the Board of Supervisors accept the recommendations of the Final Report of the Hunter Mill Road Area Special Study Task Force dated January 18, 2006. The Report reflected the results of an eight week public engagement process in which comments, sentiments and priorities of area residents and other stakeholders were received. The Report recommended that the adopted Comprehensive Plan not be changed, and that the Special Study area should remain designated for low-density residential development at .2 to .5 dwelling units per acre. In recognition of this recommendation, I moved that the Board give no further consideration to those Area Plan Review nominations that proposed changes to the land use and density for this area. I also moved that nominations recognizing Hunter Mill Road as a Virginia Byway, eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places be scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Commission. I also asked that staff look at developing ways to map the presence of Naturally Occurring Asbestos in the area and asked that the other recommended items related to transportation and trails be reviewed. For a complete report of the Task Force click the following link: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/huntermill> .

Tyson's Land Use Task Force

Dialogues were held throughout the months of January and February to gain insight from the community on the things that were most important to the future of a viable Tysons Corner. On February 27, a Consultant provided a Report of the items heard most at the twenty outreach meetings, including the future character of Tysons; vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, density, the environment, infrastructure, parking, public facilities and Metro. The complete list of community comments can be found at the following link: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner> .

Dranesville Estates

Christopher Management has submitted application RZ/FDP 2005-DR-015 to place 32 single family homes on 13 acres at Dranesville Road near Bennett Street and the Chestnut Grove Cemetery in Herndon. Outstanding issues are density, compatibility and setbacks. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this application on April 19, 2005. Preliminary Development plans are available to citizens for review in my Herndon office at 730 Elden Street between 8 a.m. until 12 p.m. Please call (703) 471-5076 for an appointment.

I welcome review and comments from all citizens on the active land use cases in the Dranesville District.

Real Estate Assessments

By now most Dranesville District property owners should have received their 2006 Real Estate Assessment Notice. The average increase in the McLean area is 16.52%, Great Falls is 16.74%, and Herndon is 22.60%. This is the seventh year of double-digit increases in Dranesville, and the sixth year for similar increases across the County. The largest increases this year are in Annandale (23.85%), Springfield (25.04%) and the Lorton area (25.75%). The countywide average increase was 20.57%. For each of the last two years, my own assessment has risen 22%.

Real estate assessments are based on actual sales. As we all know, in 2005, sales volume of existing housing stock continued to be strong. However, it does reflect a decline from the total number of sales of existing homes in 2004. The market sales of existing homes totaled around 22,500 in 2005, compared to about 25,300 in 2004. The pace of sales slowed most in the 2005 fourth quarter. The number of days a property was listed for sale increased from an average of about 20 days in 2004, to 23 days in 2005. This climbed to 38 days on the market as of December, 2005. So far in 2006 this has now increased to 57 days. Another trend that seems to predict a period of more moderate growth is the median price of residential properties, which was up 7.61 this January, compared to a 26% increase in January 2005.

When you receive your assessment notice in the mail, I encourage you to read the blue insert to get a better understanding of the assessment process. If you would like more information or if you disagree with your assessment, contact the Department of Tax Administration online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta. The telephone contact number is 703/222-8234. Representatives from DTA will also be at my Town Meeting to answer any questions you may have.

The ultimate impact of assessments on homeowners is determined when the tax rate is established in April. The County Executive's proposed budget recommends a 7 cent reduction in the Real Estate Tax Rate to \$0.93 per \$100 of assessed value. This would reduce the taxes paid by the typical homeowner by \$379 annually from what would have been paid under the \$1.00 per \$100 of assessed value rate (current rate). However, the homeowner would still pay an increase of \$544 in FY 2007 with the 7 cent reduction. The Board of Supervisors has reduced the tax rate by 30 cents since FY 2002, and the cumulative result for the average homeowner is a reduction of \$3,295. I strongly support a further reduction in the tax rate and will be working to make that happen. For more information about real estate assessment, please visit: <http://icare.fairfaxcounty.gov/main/home.aspx>

Tax Relief for Seniors: *Seniors who are eligible or think they are eligible for tax relief can meet with a county tax counselor for guidance. Appointments are available on Tuesday, March 21 and Friday, April 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call Supervisor's DuBois office to set up an appointment – 703-356-0551.*

Free Mulch and Leaf Fertilizer

The Division of Solid Waste Disposal and Resource Recovery operates a brush grinding operation which manufactures double-shredded wood mulch. The mulch is free, clean and good quality. Leaf mulch is also available throughout March. The I-66 Transfer Station on West Ox Road and the I-95 Citizen Disposal Facility have mulch loaders for citizens to utilize. The loaders eliminate manually loading your pickup truck or into a hauling company truck.

The Division of Solid Waste Disposal and Resource Recovery does not endorse any hauling companies. However, for a list of companies that do hauling or for more information about this free program please visit, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/dispmulch.htm>

Proposed Fiscal Year Budget 2007

County Executive Tony Griffin presented his proposed FY 2007 Budget to the Board of Supervisors on Monday, February 27. The budget was prepared in accordance with the Board's Budget Guidelines, which limited expenditure growth to 6.0 percent for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and 5.0 percent for the County, excluding new facilities, the Metro contribution, and required County and School debt service payments.

Direct General Fund Expenditures, which are associated with traditional municipal services such as police, fire, EMS, libraries, parks, recreation, etc., are recommended to increase 3.88 percent over FY 2006. The recommended transfer to the School Operating Fund is \$1.52 billion, an increase of \$85.88 million over FY 2006. The school transfer represents 52.2% of the budget. Also in the proposed budget, a total of \$56.6 million in additional County support is provided to the FCPS for SACC and Head Start programs, School public health nurses and clinic room aides, school crossing guards and school resource officers, and after-school programming.

As noted in my article on Real Estate Assessments, the proposed budget includes a seven-cent reduction in the tax rate, from \$1.00 per \$100 assessed value to \$0.93 per \$100 of assessed value. The value of a penny in FY 2007 equals \$21.9 million.

The budget proposes to add 156 positions, primarily to support new facilities and to meet public safety requirements: including staff for three new fire stations, including one in our District at Route 7 and Beulah Road, the addition of a fourth person to each rescue company, new police officers for patrol, additional staff for the Public Safety Communications center, several new positions for the police Criminal Investigations Bureau, and three new animal control officers. Staffing is also included to expand after-school programming from 3 to 5 days a week at all FCPS Middle Schools, and to enhance the response to increased zoning and health-related complaints. In addition, one position is being added to operate our new Clemyjontri Park, which is the County's first fully accessible playground park serving disabled children, and the activities at Turner Farm in Great Falls. Despite this proposed increase, the number of positions remains flat at 11.18 per 1,000 county residents.

The budget also continues to set aside the value of one penny (real estate tax) for affordable housing and one penny for stormwater management.

The complete budget can be found on the County Web site <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/budgetnews/>, and copies of the Citizens Guide to the Budget are available in my office. Public hearings on the budget will be held on April 3, 4, and 5, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the County Government Center. To sign up to speak, call the office of the Clerk to the Board at 703-324-2391 or sign up online by e-mailing: Clerk-totheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Would you or someone you know like to receive the Dranesville Dispatch electronic newsletter?
Send your name, address and email address to Dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov

Drug and Alcohol Prevention Talk

Churchill Road Elementary School will be hosting a Drug and Alcohol Talk for Elementary School parents on March 22 at 7:00 p.m. This program is being sponsored by the Safe Community Coalition and will present information about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse facing our children today and on how to communicate with your children about this serious issue. Parents of 5th and 6th graders at all elementary schools are invited. Churchill Road Elementary School is located at 7100 Churchill Road in McLean.

Fairfax County Public Library Perspectives Series

March 21 -- McLean Community Center -- 7:30 p.m.

Frank Deford, a senior contributing editor for *Sports Illustrated*, who's also heard on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" will discuss "Sports: the Hype and the Hoopla." Tickets will be distributed on a first come, first served basis beginning at 6:30 p.m.; limit two tickets per person.

Protecting Yourself from Identity Theft

Identity theft and *identity fraud* are terms used to refer to all types of crime in which someone wrongfully obtains and

uses another person's personal information in some way that involves fraud or deception, typically for economic gain. Victims now spend an average of 600 hours recovering from this crime, often over a period of years. Even after the thief stops using the information, victims struggle with the impact. This includes increased insurance or credit card fees, inability to find a job, high interest rates and battling collection agencies and issuers who refuse to clear records despite substantiating evidence of the crime.

How does Identity Theft Occur?

- They steal your wallet, purse or mail.
- They complete a change of address form to divert your mail to another location.
- They practice dumpster diving.
- They fraudulently obtain your credit report by posing as a landlord, employer or someone else having a legitimate need to the information.
- They get your business or personnel records at work.
- They find personal information in your home. (either through burglary or even contract workers you hire)
- They use personal information you share on the Internet.
- They buy your personal information from "inside" sources.
(Ex: pay store employee for credit card application)

How do they use the information?

- They call your credit card issuer and, pretending to be you, ask to change the mailing address on your account.
- They open a new credit card account, using your name, date of birth and SSN with a P.O. Box or different address. The delinquent account is then on your credit line.
- They establish phone service or wireless service in your name.
- They can even start utility services in your name.
- They open a bank account in your name and write bad checks on the account.
- They file for bankruptcy under your name.
- They counterfeit checks or debit cards, and drain your bank account.
- They buy cars by taking out auto loans in your name.

What can I do to minimize my risk?

1. Before you reveal any personal information, find out how it will be used and whether it will be shared with others. Know who you are talking to.
2. Pay attention to your billing cycles.
3. Guard your outgoing mail from theft by using post office collection boxes or your local post office.
4. Minimize the identification information and the number of cards you carry to what you actually need.
5. Do not give out personal information on the phone, through the mail or on the Internet unless you have initiated the contact or know with whom you are dealing. Make sure Internet sites are secure sites when using your credit card to purchase on line.
6. Destroy documents containing personal information by any means that results in their complete destruction, such as shredding or burning. Make sure catalogs containing your information are destroyed as well.
7. Personal information in your home should be maintained in a secure location.
8. Give your SSN only when absolutely necessary.
9. Identification containing your SSN number should be protected from theft. (Don't have SSN on checks).
10. Order a copy of your credit report from each of the three major reporting agencies every year.
Equifax www.equifax.com 1-800-685-1111 (report) 1-800-525-6285 (fraud)
Experian www.experian.com 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742)
Trans Union www.tuc.com 1-800-916-8800 (report) 1-800-680-7289 (fraud)
11. Where possible, put passwords on your credit card, bank and phone accounts.

For more information on how to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of identity fraud please contact:

Officer Tom Black • Fairfax County Police • McLean District Station • 703-556-7750 ext. 2227

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